

Thomas, Felicia

From: DeGering, Tracy
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 2:56 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Woodruff, Leigh
Subject: RE: NPDES General Permit for Small Suction Dredge Mining questions;

Hi Don,

Unfortunately, I did mean the Main Salmon River, and not the Little Salmon River. According to data we received from NOAA Fisheries, the majority of the entire Salmon River drainage has been designated as critical habitat for steelhead (as well as Chinook salmon), and is proposed to be closed year round under the NPDES General Permit. All designated critical habitat areas for fish listed under the Endangered Species Act are proposed to be closed. If the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service have concurred with another agency on a determination for suction dredging in a specific area, and a miner includes that concurrence with the application/Notice of Intent, the EPA will cover the operation under the General Permit.

Please let me know if you have additional questions, or would like this and/or other topics included in the April 9th webinar.

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From: (b) (6)
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 7:29 PM
To: DeGering, Tracy
Cc: Woodruff, Leigh
Subject: NPDES General Permit for Small Suction Dredge Mining questions;

Tracy,

I am requesting a clarification to the answer about the Salmon River. I am gathering that you may have meant to reference the Little Salmon River, which is closed to suction dredging and is a tributary to the Main Salmon River. It enters the Salmon River at Riggins and was planted some years ago with what is referred to as an A-run fall steelhead. The Main Salmon River is not a river in which steelhead spawn and so the fish are not in the river at the time of year when the limited dredging season is open. The steelhead do start to run up the rivers at the very tail end of the dredging season in small numbers. What may have been observed in the Salmon River in the summertime are most likely the carcasses of spawned out salmon which float to their final resting place.

Please let me know if I am correct about this matter.

Don Smith